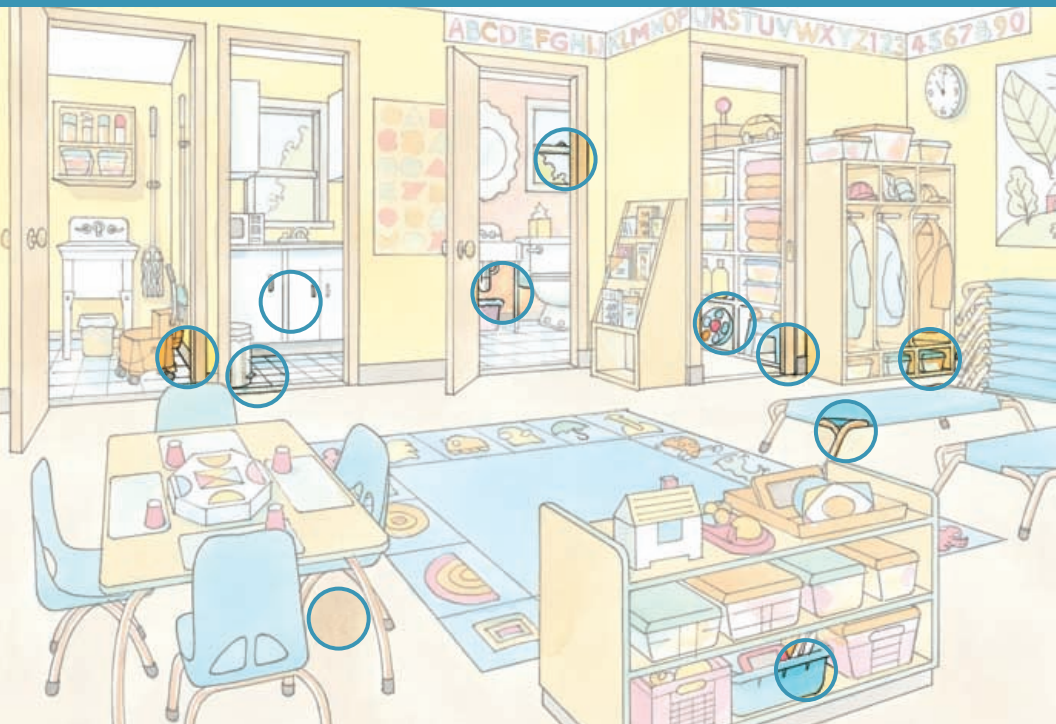


Safer Pest Control for Child Care Facilities



A Guide to Help You Get Started

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About This Guide

Pest control is an important part of a safe child care environment.

This guide will help you:

- develop a plan for managing pests safely
- comply with pest management regulations for child care facilities
- learn about common pests and how to prevent them
- limit the use of pesticides
- find the right pest management company
- educate staff and parents about safer pest control

Keeping Children Safe

Pests can be harmful to children's health. They can contaminate food and trigger allergies and asthma.

New York City child care facilities are required by law to:

- be free of rodents, insects and other pests, and any condition that can attract pests
- use a pest management strategy that focuses on long-term prevention
- notify parents before pesticides are used
- use only pest management professionals licensed by New York State

Setting Up an Integrated Pest Management Plan

The best way to pest proof your facility is to address the cause of the pest problem directly. Integrated pest management (IPM) is a safer, more effective way of controlling pests. It focuses on preventing pests by depriving them of everything they need to survive: food, water and shelter.

Your facility's integrated pest management plan should:

- identify a staff member to follow up on pest problems and complaints
- explain how staff and parents should report signs of pests
- include a schedule and checklist for inspecting and monitoring for pests
- provide steps for controlling and preventing pests
- include contact information for a licensed pest management company

1. Look for Signs of Pests

- Routinely look for signs of pests and conditions that can attract them.
- Check for places where pests can get in or hide.

Look behind and under refrigerators, sinks and other appliances.

Look around garbage cans.

Check walls and corners for cracks and crevices.

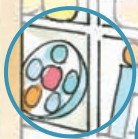
Check under tables.



Check windows and areas around windows.



Look in and around utility closets, storage areas, cubbies and bins.

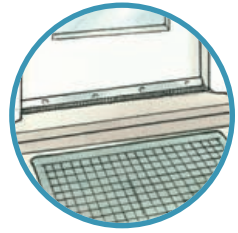


Inspect cots.



2. Keep Pests Out

- Install door sweeps on the bottom of outside doors.
- Keep outside doors closed.
- Repair or install window and door screens.
- Seal cracks and holes outside the building with caulk or cement. Seal gaps around pipes, ducts, baseboards, and window and door frames.
- Fill holes in walls and around pipes leading into walls.



3. Clean Up

Inside

Cleaners and Disinfectants

- Regular cleaning is important. When there is less buildup of dirt and germs, there is less need for strong chemicals.
- Wash surfaces with soap and water to remove dirt and germs.
- If you use a cleaner or disinfectant, always read and follow the label directions. Only use products registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
- If you use bleach, always dilute it and wear gloves. Never mix with other cleaning products.

Get Rid of Clutter

- Keep storage areas clean and organized.
- Remove boxes and piles of papers, posters or books not used every day. Clutter gives pests lots of places to hide.
- Organize materials in clear plastic bins.
- Use wired shelves with the bottom at least six inches above the floor.
- Recycle or throw away cardboard.



Outside

Control Weeds, Shrubs, Bushes and Trash

- Trim shrubs, bushes and plants growing close to outside walls. Keep ground bare at least 12 inches from the building.
- Keep lawn mowed.
- Never keep equipment or materials close to the building.
- Place dumpsters and recycling bins as far away from the building as possible.



4. Starve Them

Mice, cockroaches and other pests need very little food to survive. Don't make your food or trash their food.

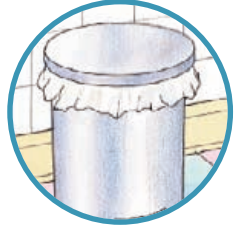
Pest-Proof Food

- Keep kitchen and food preparation, eating and storage areas clean and dry. Clean microwave and oven every day.
- Sweep, mop or vacuum floors every day. Always use a high efficiency vacuum.
- Move equipment and shelves at least once a week and clean under and behind them.
- Store food in tightly sealed containers.



Manage Trash

- Use trash cans with tight-fitting covers and liners.
- Empty and clean them often, inside and out.



Remove Water Sources

- Fix leaks as quickly as possible.
- Get rid of standing water.



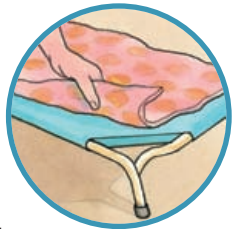
Tips for Managing Common Pests

Ants

- If you spot an ant trail, follow the ants to where they're entering or to the nest if possible.
- Seal ant entryways, cracks and crevices.

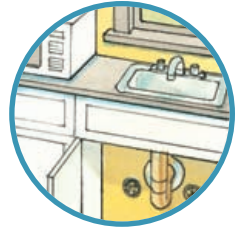
Bed Bugs

- Educate staff about bed bugs and what signs to look for, such as bite marks or blood stains on sleeping cots.
- Check children's belongings every day.
- Inspect mattresses, cots and all wooden furniture every week.
- Update parents about what the center is doing to prevent bed bugs.
- Give parents information on how to prevent bed bugs and what to do if they find any at home.
- Ask parents to put children's clothes and other personal items in sealed plastic containers or bags.
- Put children's clothing and belongings in individual cubbies.



Cockroaches

- The best way to prevent roaches is to keep everything clean and dry.
- Roaches prefer dark, warm and moist areas. Look behind and under sinks, stoves and other appliances.
- Check along the sides of drawers and cabinets. Seal cracks or openings.



Flies and Gnats

- Larger flies tend to breed in rotting garbage and bits of food in hard-to-reach areas around garbage cans, dumpsters and custodial closets. Keep these areas very clean.
- Smaller flies such as gnats and fruit flies usually breed in plants that have been watered too much or in bits of food, like fruit or vegetable scraps caught under appliances or in and around drains or toilets.
- Don't overwater plants.
- If you see flies or gnats, clean the areas every day.



Rats and Mice

- Look for places where rats live. Most rats live in nests or burrows under bushes or plants.
- Look for rat droppings, gnaw marks, dark greasy track marks along walls (rub marks) or flattened paths outside burrows.
- Mice usually live inside structures. Look for nests and holes in the building or crevices under doors.



Mosquitoes

- Remove standing water from pots, containers, cans and toys.
- Clean drains and gutters regularly.
- Keep window and door screens in good repair.

Yellow Jackets, Bees and Wasps

- Look under roof overhangs for wasp nests or holes where bees can get in.
- Check around bushes for yellow jacket nests.
- Cover food and juice when you're outside and bring them inside as soon as you're done. Once yellow jackets discover food, they will come back even after the food is removed.
- Don't let children play anywhere near nests.
- Tightly cover garbage bags and containers.
- Remove fruit that drops from trees.



When to Hire a Pest Management Company

If you need help getting rid of pests, contact a pest management professional licensed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

It's against the law for child care centers to apply pesticides themselves.

A good pest management company will:

- inspect the center before quoting a price
- provide a written inspection report and pest management plan
- use integrated pest management, which includes:
 - educating you on how to prevent and control pests
 - visiting as often as needed to monitor and inspect for pests
 - using pesticides only if needed
 - putting rodent bait in tamper-resistant containers and out of reach of children
 - providing copies of product labels and safety information
- have experience working with child care facilities and provide references
- employ qualified, well-trained pest management professionals

Younger children are the most vulnerable to harm from pesticides. That's because they're growing quickly and are more likely to crawl on the floor (where pesticides can settle) and put things in their mouths. **If the pest management company must use pesticides, New York City child care facilities are required by law to:**

- notify parents at least 48 hours before a pest management professional applies pesticides, except when pests pose an immediate health threat
- never allow a pest management company to apply pesticides during school hours, when children are present, or just before school opens
- ensure that children stay out of the treated area for the maximum time required by New York State and New York City law or as specified on the label
- maintain records of all pesticides used and make the records available on request

More Information

- **New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene**
General Pest Control: **nyc.gov** and search for **pest control**
Day Care: **nyc.gov** and search for **day care**
Bed Bugs: **nyc.gov/bedbugs**
Rats: **nyc.gov/rats**
- **New York City Poison Control Center**
800-222-1222 or call **311**
- **New York State Department of Environmental Conservation**
dec.ny.gov or **718-482-4994**
- **National Pesticide Information Center**
npic.orst.edu or **800-858-7378**



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